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COMMONWEAL

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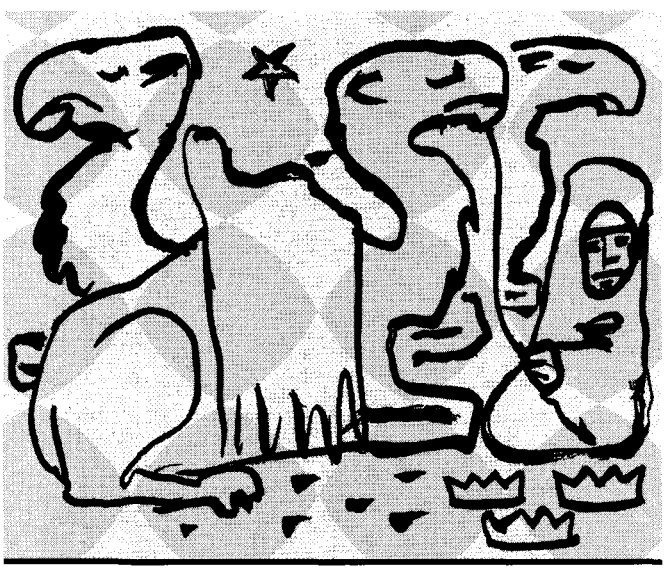

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To the Editors

We're recycled!

Each issue continues to please, educate, amuse, and interest me. I pass the magazine on to a retired priest friend, who in turn passes it on. I particularly enjoyed the issue of November 20. The column by John Garvey ["Gay Bashing"] spoke to, and for, many. Thank you, and him.

MARY C. PHILLIPS
Tiffin, Ohio

Sticky, soft money

I was surprised to see your November 20 editorial repeat the myth of Senator Russell Feingold's (D-Wis.) refusal to accept "soft" money in his recent campaign for reelection. If a candidate accepted or gave approval for an expenditure such as an attack ad, the money would no longer be soft. Refusal to accept soft money is meaningless, but it provides cover for the candidate's party to produce issue ads with soft money without fear of violating election laws.

I live in Wisconsin. We received two mailings on the Monday before the election and another on election day. All three mailings were Democratic soft money issue ads attacking by name Feingold's opponent, Mark Neumann. So much for Feingold's refusal!

Apparently, the local and national media never bothered to check whether or not the Democratic party actually directed soft money to Feingold's campaign. Sad to say, neither did *Commonweal*.

Far from being a triumph for campaign finance reform, Feingold's campaign provided still another reason for cynicism. WILLIAM COUGHLIN HUNT
Somerset, Wis.

The editors reply: We cannot explain the origin of the mailings Mr. Hunt received. It is possible that some group other than the Democratic party and sympathetic to Senator Feingold was responsible. However, it is a matter of public record that the senator refused to allow the national Democratic party to run so-called "issue" ads on his behalf. In *Commonweal*'s December 4 issue ["The Buck Stops Here"], former Wisconsin governor Patrick J. Lucey explained Feingold's position in detail.

Sifting the ashes

To prepare us for a class discussion on poverty as a family secret, our anthropology professor had us read, *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt. To supplement the discussion, I brought in Margaret O'Brien Steinfels's short essay, "I Knew Angela: Did Frank McCourt?" [November 7, 1997].

Who was the real Angela McCourt? Was she the elderly immigrant woman who helped a young mother take care of her children? Or was she the passive, defeated Irish woman who enabled an alcoholic husband? Was she the woman who told her son not to let doors of opportunity close on him? Or was she the grandmother-like woman wreathed in cigarette smoke?

As our anthropology class unfolded, we discussed many issues embedded in this story: the pain of poverty and hunger and the shame that can drive families to keep this part of their lives a secret; the shame of poverty expressed in cultures, such as Brazil's, where people describe starving children as "weak-willed" rather than hungry; how hunger, as described in *Angela's Ashes*, raises concerns about family bonds and the disruption of kinship ties; about the resilience that comes out of the darkest of family lives, which allowed Frank McCourt and his brothers not only to survive but to thrive.

We discussed how family members can see a person differently than someone outside, and even how siblings can tell very different stories about their parents and their family secrets.

Whoever the real Angela McCourt was, the stories her son tells, and the woman Steinfels thought she knew, led our class to a captivating conversation. May Angela rest in peace, but may the varied memories of her continue to instruct and challenge us.

PAUL Q. KANE, S.J.
Berkeley, Calif.

Resisting evil

Replying to my letter [Correspondence, November 6], Sidney Callahan defends her stance quite vigorously. I support, as she does, an international police force—with teeth—and I would greet with joy any legal, nonlethal means of coercion she or anyone else can come up with. Meantime, we will probably continue to rely on blunt instruments like sanctions that are lethal only to noncombatants. Saddam Hussein, well fed and well doctored, continues to strut in Iraq, as we help to make sure that those who suffer most are his own people.

And what of this police force we both want? If it's to work at all, it will have to follow the Christ who "co-

(Continued on page 30)

The next issue of *Commonweal* will be dated January 15, 1999

A Happy Christmas to All

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A millennial development?

The paranoid thriller, *Enemy of the State* (now showing at your local movie theater), has a villain who bears an uncanny resemblance to former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, architect of the 1960s military build-up in South Vietnam. Though opponents called McNamara a "war criminal," he may be surprised to find himself three decades later a dark icon in a conspiracy movie that features a rogue national security official carrying out his own policy against "enemies of the state."

The paranoid links *Enemy of the State* conjures up between the lies and secrets of Vietnam and current anxieties about the technology of spying and government invasion of privacy will seem comical to those old enough to remember McNamara's overblown confidence in technology. Still, the links to criminal acts committed in the name of the state are evocative, especially in light of General Augusto Pinochet's extended stay in England under threat of extradition to Spain for "crimes against humanity." In their ruling detaining Pinochet, Britain's Law Lords eloquently reiterated a traditional moral understanding: "certain types of conduct, including torture and hostage-taking, are not acceptable conduct on the part of anyone. This applies as much to heads of state—as it does to everyone else." In other words, tyrants, dictators, kings, and presidents cannot get away with murder.

Whatever Pinochet's ultimate fate, the fact that he has been charged at all signals that his "amnesty" carries no warrant beyond the borders of Chile. International opinion and law may be reaching a turning point. Are we in the course of concluding that (1) national sovereignty can no longer protect agents of the state who commit criminal acts that would bring individuals before a court of law, and (2) national sovereignty can no longer protect from international prosecution officials and agents who commit such crimes?

Elsewhere in this issue, William Pfaff writes: "There are worse men than the benighted and reactionary Augusto Pinochet who enjoy tranquil retirements today" (*see* page 8). There are also men not so directly responsible as Pinochet for crimes against humanity who are, nonetheless, complicit in them. Government officials, military men, and intelligence agents in the United States, and elsewhere, should feel uneasy, not necessarily because wholesale indictments are on the horizon, but because international law and practice may no longer allow inhuman acts to be defended in the name of the state.

Such is the consequence for Bosnian war criminals (mostly Serbs, but Croats, and Bosnians as well), who are slowly being arrested and judged by the international court in The Hague. But what about other less directly egregious cases? Brian Brown writes on page 10 of continuing efforts to close down the School of the Americas, a U.S. cold-war counterinsurgency training center for the military of Latin America. Many of its graduates are now known to have been responsible for the worst atrocities in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. What responsibility does the U.S. military bear, or the politicians who can't quite bring themselves to vote the SOA out of business, or citizen-taxpayers who don't rise up and say, "enough"?

The list of such crimes is very long. The French in Algeria, the Iraqis toward the Kurds and Kuwaitis, the Israelis in Lebanon, the U.S. in Vietnam, the Indonesians

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in East Timor, the Russians in Afghanistan and Chechnya—the list is so long that a wholesale effort at indictment would soon end in the collapse of this modest turn in international law.

Perhaps there can only be, as with Pinochet, small steps that gradually build up case law and symbolic efforts that will serve as a deterrent against such crimes. Governments and their citizens are put on notice that some acts are a crime, and that a crime is a crime is a crime no matter who does it and no matter what their justification. As the century begins to turn, acknowledgment of that fact alone would be a millennial achievement.

INDULGE US

New York Times reporter Alessandra Stanley made the front page on November 28 with some shocking news from the Vatican. "Urging Millennial Penitence, Pope Is Offering Indulgences," the story's headline snickered. What followed was a mishmash of potted history ("a practice that drove Martin Luther to rebel, beginning the Reformation"), obtuse theological commentary ("Indulgences are an ancient form of church-granted amnesty"), and barely concealed condescension ("liberal Catholics are embarrassed by a practice that seems to offer a short-cut to salvation").

The news peg for this patronizing essay was the release of the papal bull *Incarnationis mysterium* in which John Paul II proclaims 2000 a Holy Year, and authorizes the dispensing of indulgences for such practices as charitable works and acts of self-denial.

Stanley states that the pope's aim is to restore indulgences to a "prominent" position in Catholic penitential practice. That seems dubious. For in truth, the theology of indulgences is intricate—sometimes too intricate—and the practice has notoriously been abused, as John Paul knows. Still the church has never abandoned its right to confer a remission of punishment for sin, in this world or the next. Indulgences do not, and never have, granted "amnesty" for sin, which can only be forgiven after confession, personal penitence, and prayer. But even repentant sinners, the church teaches, must perform acts of purification. Indulgences release sinners from such obligations. To do this, the church redistributes what is called "the treasury of merits of Christ and the saints" to those in spiritual need.

The very notion of an afterlife, let alone the idea of judgment, is of course the real stumbling block to many people. The claim that what the church binds on earth is also bound in heaven only aggravates that scandal. Yet making manifest the connection between this life and the next is one of the great works of biblical religion. For Catholics, that connection is perhaps best expressed in the notion of Christ's mystical body. In baptism we are incorporated into the communion of Christ and his saints. With that incorporation comes a recognition of our mutual interdependence. As members of one body, those who are better off, for example, understand that they have an obligation to share what they have with the poor. In a similar fashion, early Christians fasted and prayed not just for themselves, but for one another and of course for the dead. As members of one body, the sharing of graces, like the sharing of material necessities, was a natural expression of solidarity, not a crude purchase of spiritual assets. It is in this sense that the church is authorized to grant indulgences, to draw spiritual nourishment for the needy from the vast reserves of Christ's grace.

"Count your own blessings!"

If this idea strikes one as folly, you might ask if people are more likely to share their worldly goods if they also have a sense of shared spiritual identity. Or one might ask if the *Times* would be quite so supercilious in reporting on the traditional Jewish practice of saying *kaddish*. *Kaddish*, after all, is not said for the benefit of the living. It is no mere metaphor. By saying *kaddish*, the Jew believes he will reduce for those who have died the time spent in *Gehenna*. It is a sharing of spiritual gifts—a beautiful expression of how, as the psalmist says, love conquers even death. Only the spiritually tone-deaf would call it a short-cut to salvation.

In the spirit of the millennium, however, we are willing to grant Ms. Stanley and the *Times* a partial indulgence. They obviously suffer from what moral theologians call "invincible ignorance."

COMMONWEAL'S GREATEST HITS...

We kick off the Christmas season as well as *Commonweal*'s seventy-fifth anniversary year with a favorite John Cogley (*see* page 7) essay. A former *Commonweal* editor (1949–54) and for many years a columnist for the magazine, Cogley's writing—unpretentious, lucid, and fair-minded—exemplifies how the magazine has always tried to address its readers. Each issue of the magazine for 1999 will feature a short excerpt from our treasure trove of seventy-five years of weekly and biweekly publication. Some of the excerpts will touch on significant controversies, others on topics of historical interest, and some, we hope, will merely amuse. So, merry Christmas. And to all those, both readers and contributors, who have kept this enterprise going for three-quarters of a century, we say congratulations and happy birthday!

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They have set up the big tree in Rockefeller Plaza; the skinny street-corner Santa Clauses are out again and above the low mournful sounds of New York traffic their little silver bells are as insistent as *Sanctus* warnings; the big stores on Fifth Avenue are gaily festooned and buzzing with shoppers—Christmas is here again. At Mass the choir sings *Rorate coeli desuper*—liturgically, another year has passed and Christ is about to be born again. It seems not the time to write of events but of the Event.

It is said that the celebration of Christmas is becoming ever more secularized, and this is sadly true. But how can one who has ever considered the Event go through the season dumbly? For a Catholic the memories of a lifetime rise to the surface. One cannot be a Catholic and not know faith, in himself and others, and it is the faith that the Child was born and the world was redeemed which gives Christmas its meaning. Even to those who say Christmas is a myth, just the possibility of it, the fact that millions upon millions have believed it, gives the feast its ultimate meaning. Voltaire is supposed to have said that if God did not exist he would have had to be invented. But who could have invented Christmas?

Halfway through life (a matter of statistics), you look back upon all the Christmases you have known. Each one is a little different from the others. The Event remains changeless. You change though, and you either learn more of what Christmas means—which is growth—or the meaning of it begins to escape you—which, I take it, is retrogression. The child understands Christmas as a child; the Trappist monk understands it as a man. It is better to be a man, unless you have lost the clarity of childhood—and then it may be better if you had never heard of Christmas because you have moved away from, not toward, the Event.

As a youngster you learn that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, that there were wise men and shepherds and angels in the stable with the Child, his Mother, and Saint Joseph and that a wonderful thing happened. You may not understand why the Child was born, because you know nothing of sin (that comes with the dark wisdom of maturity), but you know that what happened was a thing of wonder, of beauty, and of love—and that is enough for faith. That is enough for a child's Christmas.

I remember third grade and a certain Sister Sara. We were all boys in that class, and yet the Sister wanted a Christmas play. Some of us were angels and a few were shepherds. There were three kings and a Saint Joseph, and one kid named Emil was dressed in blue and white, to be the Blessed Virgin. I remember that he wore a first Communion veil over his head and a long blue robe. He must have been a holy sight. But so solemn was the occasion, so lively our faith, that no one openly jeered at him. To make fun of poor Emil would have been impious.

This was the cast. The rest of us were "extras." First we were the townsfolk of Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph went from desk to desk, pleading for room, and our role was to turn them away until finally they reached one Peter's desk. He was the kindly inn keeper who offered room in his stable. You can imagine the zest with which we played the hard-hearted townsfolk of Bethlehem. In the third grade villains are far more meaningful than heroes. I still remember the piping voices: "Go way, go way from here!"

Then, when the weary trudge from desk to desk was finished, the Mother and Saint Joseph disappeared from sight—this was the way Sister Sara planned it—and the angry townsfolk became an angelic choir. "Winds through the olive trees softly did blow, round little Bethlehem, long, long ago," the class sang with devotion while the Sister—childlike herself—pumped the little hand organ, playing a wheezy accompaniment. Then, the makeshift curtain was raised for the classic tableau. We all sang another angelic chorus: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will!"

This was crude—perhaps rude—but it was Sister Sara's way, and I have never forgotten it. The Sister surely did not know much about advanced methods of education, but there is the record: it happened many years ago, and whenever it is Christmas I think of the "Play," as we called it, the year Emil with the blue robe over his corduroy trousers and high-laced shoes was the Mother and yet nobody laughed.

That was the Christmas when the real story first made a deep impression. Before that it had been Santa Claus (or pretending to believe in Santa Claus so the folks would not be disappointed) and the presents under the tree, and a hazy idea of what was being celebrated. But the year Emil was the Blessed Mother, the Event itself came into clear focus, and ever since, though I should lose my faith a thousand times over, when Christmas is celebrated, I would still have to lose it again. You can't escape Christmas; you can only escape yourself.

JOHN COGLEY

John Cogley was executive editor of The Commonweal. *Reprinted from the 1952 Christmas issue.*

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WILLIAM PFAFF

IN THE DOCK

Holding Pinochet accountable

The great significance of the Pinochet decision is that the majority of Britain's Law Lords affirmed universal jurisdiction over crimes against humanity. They implicitly held that any national justice system is competent to prosecute such crimes.

Since the seventeenth century and Thomas Hobbes, international law was held not to be true law because there was no one to enforce it. It was said to be merely a set of agreements among a certain number of nations, which might or might not be respected.

This inspired many worthy efforts, without real effect or solid intellectual base, to promote the idea of a world government to enforce world law (and world peace). Seductive as the idea was to many people (while frightening others, who feared that world government would prove a tyranny), these efforts predictably failed.

They rested on a facile but false analogy between the world community, with all of its diversity, conflicting perceptions and interests, differing levels of civilization and political culture, and the national communities in which modern democracy and modern systems of domestic law have developed.

These national communities shared an identity, a common culture and history, and belief in a shared future. These qualities were essential to the development of national political cultures able to internalize values of individual equity and worth, hence of rights and the rule of law. (This is why multi-culturalism is a bad idea: it attacks the sense of kinship and mutual obligation that sustain a nation, and through the nation, a political civilization.)

The UN exercises authority only as the agent of the nations who are its members. The most powerful of those members reject its authority when they wish to do so (hence the Security Council veto). The UN's accomplishments are many, but it is not a sovereignty, an autonomous law-giver, nor—in the absence of great-power consensus—a law-enforcer.

Britain's Law Lords have now said that crimes against humanity do not have to be defined by a world authority. They are spontaneously recognizable. As the Lord Nicholls wrote in his decision, "certain types of conduct, including torture and hostage-taking, are not acceptable conduct on the part of anyone. This applies as much to heads of state, or even more so, as it does to everyone else."

Even if crimes against humanity are self-evident, and jurisdiction can be exercised by any nation's courts, these prosecutions must nonetheless be expected to remain exceptional. Despots in office are generally considered beyond legal prosecution because in the exercise of office they partake of the sovereignty of the state.

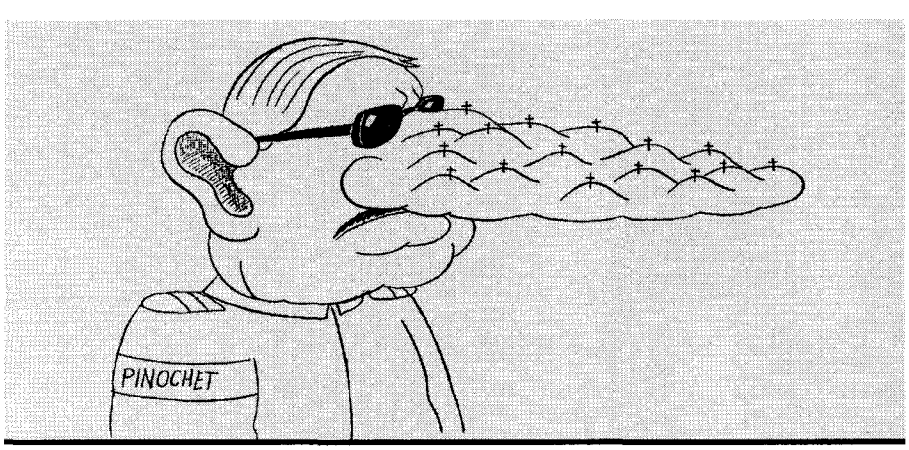
This was the conclusion drawn by Britain's High Court on October 28, when it said that General Augusto Pinochet could not be arrested because he is a former head of state. Medieval legal doctrine traditionally said there were two kings, the king in his own person, a sinner subject to God's judgment and human criticism, and the king as king, held to be the agent in this world of divine right, and therefore beyond human judgment.

The immunity of heads of state came under attack by the Allies in the world wars, when they demanded in 1918 that the Kaiser, and then in 1945 that Hitler, Mussolini, and General Hideki Tojo, Japan's prime minister, be tried. The Allies were thwarted, but established the Nuremberg Tribunal which held that individuals responsible for the crimes of governments can be punished.

Since then, the Hague and Nairobi war-crimes tribunals have been created, and a project for a permanent international court for crimes against humanity was approved by 120 nations meeting in Rome last summer. The British Law Lords made their decision in the Pinochet case in the context of this continuing development of international precedent.

The outcome of all this will be mixed. Some ex-tyrants may be prosecuted and some not, just as some political terrorists end in prison, such as Carlos the Jackal, and some end as heads of nations, such as Yasser Arafat, Menachem Begin, and Eamon DeValera.

There are worse men than the benighted and reactionary Pinochet who enjoy tranquil retirements today. His indictment by a Spanish magistrate, Baltasar Garzon, is obviously, for many Spaniards, symbolic of the trial of General Francisco Franco which never happened (and probably better that it did not).



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Some think the Pinochet case will inspire frivolous or ideological indictments, which is possible. That fear caused the American military to veto U.S. signature of the humanitarian crimes tribunal treaty approved last July in Rome—the only democracy to do so.

However, international indictments and extraditions will remain a complex affair with many obstacles. Those in the Pentagon who fear frivolous prosecutions would be better off supporting that tribunal, which incorporates institutional barriers against prosecutions without merit—including a provision which says that international prosecution is permissible only if the accused's own country refuses to try the case.

International law is headed in a new direction, and a desirable one. The virtual immunity which criminal heads of state have enjoyed until now has been an outrage to justice. The remedies now being established bring obvious problems. They nonetheless represent progress in the interminable effort to civilize man. □

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OF SEVERAL MINDS

SIDNEY CALLAHAN

'FORGIVE ME, FATHER'

Why we don't go to confession

Why don't Catholics go to confession anymore? Or not nearly as often as they used to? Church conservatives blame the "infidelity" of American Catholics on the society's rampant secularism. Here in the land of individual liberty, guilt and sin are out, permissiveness is in.

Such accusations miss the mark. They don't explain the decline in penance among deeply committed Catholics. I've heard friends say that while they faithfully attend Mass every Sunday, they no longer go to confession. "I last went when my children made their first Communion," they report; or in a more tart rejection, "I stopped going because I decided it was sick."

While I dutifully go to confession twice a year during Advent and Lent, I too have difficulties. It's not that I object to feeling guilt over sin. Without good guilt and appropriate shame we would all be psychopaths. Sin, after all, is the corollary of our freedom as moral agents created in God's image. And for Christians the acknowledgment of sin is followed by the assurance of forgiveness.

On a personal level, too, self-reflection and examination of conscience lead to mindfulness. Recent psychological research shows that confronting and expressing negative emotions can help heal mind and body. The act of confessing to God and one another is not only right, but good for us. Surely accepting this truth doesn't collapse confession into therapy; God wants us to be healed.

Then what's my problem with confession? Unfortunately, the present structure of the sacrament, the private confession offered in most parishes, seems to be disembodied, disconnected, and an all-too-brief encounter. In my own case, no matter how kind the priests have been, or how hard I try to make a good confession, the effort falls flat. The experience is too hyperverbal, abstract, and artificial. First, I have to dredge through my memory (increasingly unreliable) to try to remember and articulate all my sins. The priest doesn't know me from Eve, so he can't help me avoid laxity or scrupulosity, or some dread combination of the two.

Granted, if I had committed murder and was desperate to confess I wouldn't care who the priest was or how penance was structured. At the other extreme, Catholics who confess to their spiritual directors enter into a more intimate relationship and one with genuine continuity. But for most ordinary Catholics, having a spiritual director is as unlikely as having a family physician who makes house calls.

Another drawback with the way we set up confession is the brevity of the process; most penances given are short prayers that take three minutes at the most. Slam, bam, go in peace. Worse still, nowadays the church is deserted and there are few other penitents to keep you company. A member of our small Renew group, who no longer goes to confession regularly, made the point that in his youth confession seemed more compelling because the Saturday-night ritual provided you with spiritual support: You waited in a long line with a crowd of your fellow parishioners who were praying with you in the pews.

Today it's also the case that Catholics have been encouraged to participate more fully in the Mass, including its penitential prayers. The congregation's appeals for mercy and forgiveness gain a force absent in private confession, because as you ask the Lord and your

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brothers and sisters to forgive you, they are right there. Forgiveness and reconciliation are concretely present when the peace of Christ is exchanged.

In the same way, communal and collective celebrations of penance benefit from the spiritual energy of the gathered community. James Dallen, a priest who is an expert on penance and its development in the church, says forthrightly that "unless a parish community gathers regularly for such celebrations, the revitalization of the sacrament of penance will be impossible; it will continue to be understood and used in a distorted and misleading fashion" (*The Reconciling Community: The Rite of Penance*, Pueblo Publishing Company).

Dallen also claims that others beside the priest can participate in specific ministries of penance and reconciliation. I confess that this is a new idea to me, one I want to hear more about.

I found Dallen's presentation of the historical evolution of penance into one of the seven sacraments to be liberating. I use the word "liberating" because knowing of church changes in the past gives hope for change in the future. Since continuing conversion and reconciliation are the heart of the Christian life, the rite of penance should be a fruitful sacrament for everyone.

Obviously, we need more experimentation in penance services in local communities. In the meantime, if we are confined to isolated private confessions in empty churches, maybe we can import some practices from other Catholic lands to help make confession a more embodied and a less truncated encounter.

With tongue only partly in cheek, I suggest that we could inch down the aisle on our knees to the confessional, praying as we go (as in Mexico and the pilgrimage up Saint Patrick's Croagh in County Mayo). This would give us more time to prepare and focus our attention on the slow progress we are making in the Christian life. To pray one's penance we could kneel with arms outstretched in a cross, like the ancient Irish saints. And why can't the nonordained or nonprofessed baptized church members ever have a chance to prostrate themselves before God at the altar? At least the pope's habit of kissing the ground in gratitude could be democratized.

All right, it can't happen here. Most American Catholics not only can't sing, but they're far too reserved to express themselves in extravagant gestures of devotion. But you get the point I'm trying to make. It's damnably hard to accept the forgiveness of sin, especially our own sins, so we need all the help we can get. When penance is revitalized, the people will come. □

Brian Brown

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Report from Fort Benning

On November 22, some 2,400 of us marched in solemn procession to protest the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning, Georgia. Each of us carried a cross with the name of a person whose death had been attributed to those trained at the the SOA. My cross had the name Carlos Quientero. All I knew of Carlos Quientero was that his life was taken at age thirty-nine. Was he a teacher? A farmer? Was he a father? Some woman's husband? Did he have children? I didn't know. We carried the crosses.

Porqué? To honor thousands of forgotten victims and to get arrested by marching through Fort Benning's gate.

But some days you just can't get arrested! That's not to say my wife, Sheila, and I didn't give it our best shot. But after the first thousand protesters were stopped by soldiers and herded onto buses to be booked for trespassing on government property, the Army ran out of buses. Instead of arrest, all 2,400 of us (compared to 600 last year) were handed a "letter of ejection" by the Department of the Army. It read in part: "Your entry onto the Fort Benning Military Reservation to march in protest against the U.S. Army School of the Americas has resulted in your apprehension for Criminal Trespass....Accordingly, you are hereby ejected and ordered to not reenter the confines of the Fort Benning Military Reservation....Whoever reenters, shall be fined not more than $5,000 or imprisoned not more than six months, or both."

Included in our 2,400 were some who had already served sentences as well as 70 protesters from last year intending to be arrested a second time, which meant fine and imprisonment. Sheila and I had expressly come to take the place of anyone who had crossed the line the previous year, and speaking for myself, I was looking for a replacement for the following year, as I was not anxious to do six months in the slammer. Sheila would. Others did.

If you don't know about the School of the Americas, you should. Our tax dollars support it—almost $20 million a year. The SOA was established in Panama in 1946 to show soldiers from Central and South America how to counter Communist insurgency in their own countries. Over the past fifty years, an estimated 60,000 young men have been trained at the SOA, now at Fort Benning. During the cold war, this training was increasingly utilized by repressive governments to stifle the legitimate desires of the indigenous and disenfranchised peoples of their own countries and to violently suppress voices for progressive change. Thousands of declassified State Department, Defense Department, and CIA documents, as well as the UN Truth Commission, confirm U.S. involvement and complicity with death squads trained by the SOA.

Counterinsurgency techniques became a euphemism for torture, rape, assassination, interrogation, coercion, false imprisonment, and extortion. Particularly at risk were and are teachers, student activists, church workers, union organizers, health-care workers, and *campesinos*. When the United

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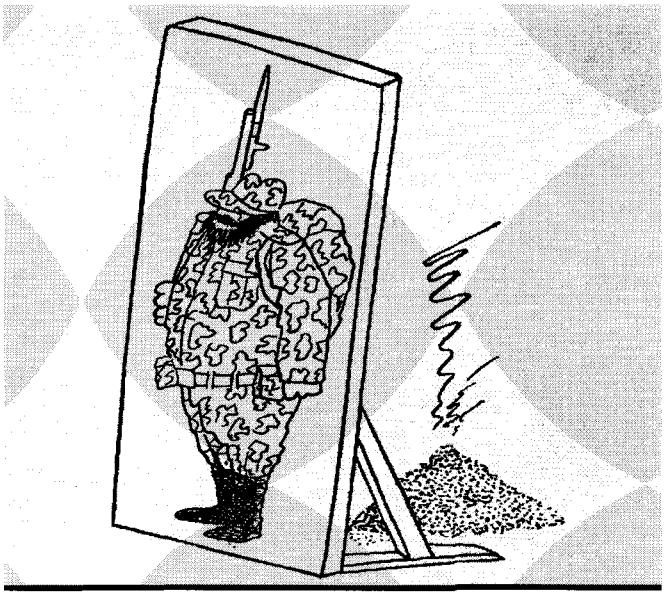
States Intelligence Oversight Board was forced to divulge the content of SOA training manuals in 1996, the *New York Times* editorialized that "Americans can now read for themselves some of the noxious lessons the United States Army taught to thousands of Latin American military and police officers at the School of the Americas...." Congressman Joseph Kennedy (D-Mass.) summarized the significance of the manuals. "The Pentagon," he said, "revealed what activists opposed to the school have been alleging for years—that foreign military officers were taught to torture and murder."

Latin American nations with the worst human-rights records have consistently sent the most soldiers to the SOA. Examples include: Bolivia during the reign of terror of General Banzer; Nicaragua during the Somoza family dictatorship; and El Salvador during its thirteen-year civil war. In addition:

- Three top Peruvian officers convicted in February 1994 of murdering nine university students and a professor are SOA graduates.
- At least nineteen of the ranking Honduran officers linked to Battalion 316—a secret army unit that was home to Honduran death squads—are SOA graduates.
- Former Panamanian dictator General Manuel Noriega, a long-time CIA operative currently serving forty years in a U.S. prison for drug trafficking, graduated from the SOA.
- Another alum, Leopaldo Galtieri, headed Argentina's military junta during a period in which thirty thousand people were killed or disappeared.
- More than 100 of the 246 Colombian officers cited for war crimes by an international human-rights tribunal in 1993 are SOA graduates.

As Congressman Martin Meehan (D-Mass.) noted: "If the SOA held an alumni association meeting, it would bring together some of the most unsavory thugs in the hemisphere." Congressmen Esteban Torres (D-Calif.) and Joseph Kennedy, who introduced legislation in the House to cut funding, H.R. 611, observed "that by any reasonable standard, the extensive record of abuse by the school's graduates demonstrates that it has failed in one of its central missions—teaching respect for human rights and civilian authority." SOA courses in human rights—such as they are—were described by U.S. Army Major Retired Joseph Blair, who taught logistics at the SOA from 1986 to 1989, "as a bunch of bullshit." Blair attended one class taught by a Chilean army officer, whom he called "a Pinochet thug." According to Blair, most Latin American soldiers regard human-rights training as a joke.

Only a few of the most outrageous human-rights atrocities have made the news here at home: the assassination of Archbishop Romero; the rape, murder, and mutilation of three religious sisters and a laywoman; the gunning down of two union leaders in El Salvador; and the murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter at the University of Central America. A U.S. task force reported that the men responsible for the massacre at the university were trained at the SOA. The United Nations Truth Commission cited, as trained at the SOA, ten of twelve officers responsible for the massacre of nine hundred civilians at El Mozote, which author Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer in *School of Assassins* describes as "perhaps the single most horrific event of the bloody civil war in El Salvador."



It was the thousands of forgotten victims we honored in our solemn procession of crosses and coffins at Fort Benning. Our ranks included the young, the middle-aged, and the old, high school and college students from all over the country, clergy from every denomination, Veterans for Peace, Witness for Peace, Rainbow Coalition, Pax Chisti, Amnesty International, War Resisters League, trade unionists, and Native Americans.

Maryknoll priest Roy Bourgeois, founder of the SOA Watch, and recently released from prison (his fourth trip to the slammer) spoke "in the name of others who cannot be here." He described the SOA "as a school of terrorists that brings shame upon our country and upon us and our laws," and asked "how is the SOA curriculum healing? How does it improve the life of our sisters and brothers in Latin American? The SOA is a school of suffering...."

Four abreast, we stepped off to the measured beat of drums, carrying crosses and coffins to honor the memory of those who had been tortured, raped, kidnapped, beaten, arrested, intimidated, silenced, and murdered. Names of the dead were recited: "Anna Sanchez, age twelve," and we answered, "*Presente*," meaning Anna was present this day as we protested her death and remembered her. Sometimes the person didn't have a name. "Woman, age seventeen with unborn child." "*Presente*." Up ahead someone started singing "Amazing Grace," and we all picked it up gratefully. The song seemed comfortable and appropriate. A quarter mile into the Army base, we were stopped by soldiers and relieved of our crosses. □

Brian Brown *is a contributor and editorial publicist for* Commonweal. *He was formerly spokesman for* Time *magazine, editor of the Time Education Program, and publisher of* Worldwise *magazine.*

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THE GOD OF OUR UNDOING

The death of a child, a doctor's trial

Timothy Schilling

There are days you could not have imagined you would ever see, because the events at hand are so much at odds with what you expected or believe to be right. At such times our lives seem to be arrows speeding toward targets we ourselves can't see or know—until that target brings us up short, halted and quivering.

I have known Doctor Eugene Turner since I was a high school student in Port Angeles, Washington. I would not hesitate to call him one of the finest people I have ever met. In many ways he has been a primary model for the kind of life I would hope to lead. From our initial encounters, I have seen Turner as a person of compassion, integrity, and balance. Among the thousands who have known and respect him, who could have guessed that one day, just a few years short of retirement, Turner would stand in court to defend himself against a charge of second-degree murder?

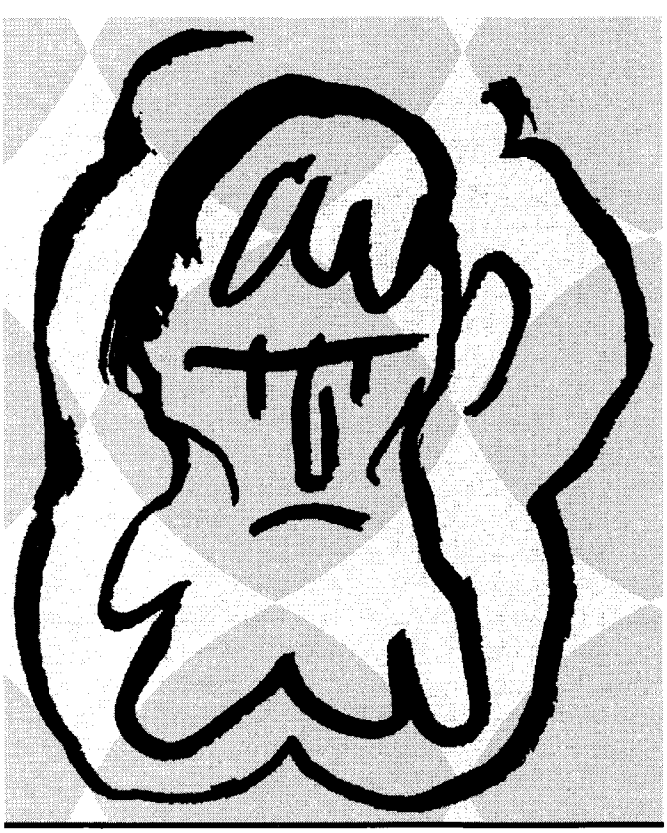
Turner is accused of willfully ending the life of Conor McInnerney, an infant under his care. The incident took place on the evening of January 12, 1998. Conor was just three days old. He was brought to the emergency room of Olympic Memorial Hospital in Port Angeles because he had stopped breathing while nursing. The events that followed are less in dispute than how to understand Turner's actions, intentions, and motives.

According to newspaper accounts, when paramedics arrived at the McInnerney home minutes after receiving the 911 call, they found Conor without breath or a pulse. No heartbeat could be reestablished in the twenty-minute trip to the hospital. Conor's eyes were fixed and dilated when emergency-room treatment began. He was limp and blue in color. The ER staff inserted an IV in his arm and administered cardiac drugs. Conor's heart began to beat after about ten minutes of this treatment, but he still could not breathe on his own. Breathing was maintained by a manual respirator. In the interim, Conor had gone without oxygen for thirty-nine minutes.

Turner, Conor's pediatrician, took charge of the treatment about forty-five minutes after the baby arrived in the ER. Normally, an infant in this condition would be airlifted from Olympic Memorial to Children's Hospital in Seattle. Port Angeles lacks the equipment and personnel to handle such cases. But on this evening, because of a snowstorm, no aircraft were able to leave Port Angeles. For the rest of the evening, Conor remained under Turner's care.

For the next forty minutes, Turner, together with other members of the hospital staff, worked to reestablish Conor's ability to breathe on his own. But Conor remained flaccid, his pupils still fixed and dilated. Turner met with the parents. He explained that even if Conor were able to recover his ability to breathe, Connor would surely have suffered massive brain damage from such prolonged oxygen deprivation. The parents decided to take Conor off the life-support system. Unable to sustain breath or a heartbeat on his own, the infant was pronounced dead at 9:54 P.M.

In the aftermath of the pronouncement of death the situation took an unexpected and fateful turn. Twenty-to-thirty minutes later a nurse noticed that Conor, who had had an irregular heartbeat, was breathing in an irregular, gasping fashion. Turner was recalled to the emergency room, arriving at about 11 P.M. The doctor understood the breathing to be "agonal breathing," a not unusual part of the dying process. Still, Turner made further efforts to restore normal breathing and



Timothy Schilling *lives in Seattle, Washington.*

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a normal heartbeat. While attempting to revive Conor, the doctor expressed his reservations about recalling the parents to the hospital. How could he put them through such a thing a second time?

What Turner did next is the subject of controversy and heartache for all involved. Sometime close to midnight, Turner placed his hand over Conor's mouth, pinching the child's nose to stop the breathing. A nurse witnessed the act and questioned it. She heard him say, "I can't stand it. I can't have this go on any more."

Turner admits to this action. However, he does not consider it an act of euthanasia. In a statement issued September 1, he said: "Conor's sporadic heartbeat and agonal respiration after he died are natural indicators of death. These types of reflexive actions can commonly occur after death. Reflexive actions can be caused by a number of factors, including strong cardio-respiratory drugs used to stimulate the heart in resuscitation efforts. But reflexive actions under these circumstances are not signs of life; they are indicators of death. In the presence of nurses, I stopped these reflexive actions. Conor was dead when I did this and, in fact, had already been dead for a long period of time. I would never block the passage of a living child. I only did this because I knew the baby was dead. No matter how many times I see a child die, it never ceases to traumatize me. It only hurts so much because I care so much. If I ever stopped caring, I would quit being a doctor. I know in my mind and in my heart that we did all that could be done for Conor McInnerney."

The only conclusion I can draw at this time is one often offered in Scripture: that God our maker is also the God of our undoing. God has the clay in his hands. He can reshape it according to his will—or shatter the fired pot to start anew.

But there are others who do not see it this way. Prominent among them are Conor's parents, Marty and Michelle McInnerney, who after initially accepting Turner's explanation now feel that a final chance at life was denied their child. Others believe that Turner acted callously or even imperiously, taking God's decision as his own.

These are the sorts of questions a jury will sort through. When is a person dead? How much leeway can we grant a doctor under pressure and uncertain circumstances? What was Turner trying to accomplish when he followed this unusual course of action?

Port Angeles is a town of 18,000 people. You would be hard-pressed to find a more respected and loved person in Port Angeles than Eugene Turner. He has practiced medicine there for twenty-eight years. Literally hundreds of people have come forward to praise the doctor's character, his care of their children, and frequent generosity in providing free medical care.

I count myself among those admirers. My family moved to Port Angeles just before I started high school. With only my immediate family living in town, the Turners became like a second family to me, bringing me along on camping trips in the summer and ice-skating trips in the winter. From the beginning I have looked up to Turner for his kindness, for the way he raised his children, and for his dedication to his work.

But as the McInnerneys' lawyer said at Turner's arraignment, "This is not a popularity contest." True. It is a tragedy. An infant has died after only three days of life. A doctor of impeccable reputation faces the loss of his reputation and a possible murder conviction. And all those surrounding these good people and terrible, almost incomprehensible events know an unfathomable sadness and a shaken faith.

As I reflect on it all, I wonder how such things come to pass. I feel heartbroken for the McInnerneys. At the same time, I honestly believe that Turner did what he could to save the child. Whether he acted appropriately under the circumstances will be decided by a jury and, ultimately, by God. Turner was asked in a September 4 interview if he would take the same course of action again. He replied, "What I did was under the circumstances at the time. I probably would not do that again, not because I don't think that's the thing to do but because of the unbelievable amount of anxiety, angst, and emotional turmoil and financial embarrassment that has come as a result of the situation."

A lingering question for me is how God fits into all this. Without wanting to skirt questions of human failings and culpability, I am stuck on the old problem of why it is part of God's plan for an innocent child to die and a faithful servant to undergo the trials of Job. I take seriously the Christian belief in God's almightiness, his providence, his full involvement in our lives. The only conclusion I can draw at this time is one often offered in Scripture: that God our maker is also the God of our undoing. God has the clay in his hands. He can reshape it according to his will—or shatter the fired pot to start anew.

Turner's present fate is one more reminder for me that God's purposes are not open to our scrutiny. No one has seen or can see God, for he dwells in "unapproachable light" (1 Timothy 6:16). Still, I would like to know. I would like to understand how God is accomplishing good with all of this. Because, to be honest, it all looks pretty dark to me.

Doctor Turner's trial is scheduled to begin January 25. □

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Richard Alleva

THE GODMOTHER

'Elizabeth'

I don't know which historians director Shekhar Kapur and writer Michael Hirst consulted while making *Elizabeth*, but it's quite clear that they must have seen *The Godfather* at least forty-seven times. For that's what this rendition of the rise of the Virgin Queen is: Michael Corleone in Tudor drag. Both movies portray the triumph of their protagonists as spiritual catastrophes. Like Michael, Elizabeth has power thrust upon her and finds herself hemmed in by the hatred of powerful enemies, the treachery of itchy subordinates, the vacillation and incomprehension of relatives, friends, and lovers. Like Michael, Elizabeth relies in the end only upon the most ruthless of her counselors, in her case the espionage master Francis Walsingham, to crush her foes and ensure her survival. The scene in which the Queen sets aside the moderate Lord Cecil in favor of Walsingham is just like Michael rejecting the peacemaking counsels of Tom Hagen when mob warfare breaks out, though "I'm sorry, Tom, you're out" is a lot less salving than "I name you Lord Burleigh to honor your retirement." The moment when Corleone spares his unreliable brother, Freddo, has its Elizabethan equivalent when the queen grants her beloved, false Robert Dudley, his life: both tyrants put their loved ones in limbo. And, finally, like the Don, Elizabeth finds that power has led her into total isolation.

But there is one decisive difference between the two movies: religion. In the Corleone saga, religion was set aside as something that grown men didn't bother with: "Religion is for women and children," Don Vito advised his son. In *Elizabeth*, religion is what all the fuss is about. The young Elizabeth, at least as Michael Hirst writes her, is a rather anachronistic humanist who wants to live and let live, pray and let pray. Her counselors know better. She must either embrace the Catholic faith that her predecessor and half-sister, "Bloody Mary," was trying to restore, or she must uproot it, along with all the nobles who still espouse it. After struggling to do neither, she turns Walsingham loose, heads roll, England becomes unalterably Protestant.

What is it that both Michael and Queen Bess lose for the sake of power? Normalcy: the joys of quotidian, sensual existence. At his tale's beginning, Michael is a decorated soldier with a pretty girl on his arm whom he hopes to marry while keeping clear of his father's "business." At the beginning of *Elizabeth*, we meet a princess who enjoys life, has a lover (Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester), and takes more delight, even after ascending the throne, in dancing with her courtiers than in scheming with them. But, just as Michael will soon sit alone in darkness, Queen Elizabeth will embalm herself in whiteness (a pasty mask under a red wig) to guarantee her solitude and untouchability as the Virgin Queen.

Even here, there is a distinction to be made. Michael sacrifices himself for his "family" (both his immediate family and the extended Mafia clan), but, by the end of the second *Godfather* film, he has lost all his loved ones to death or estrangement. Yet he continues to wheel, deal, and destroy because he has become pure will, pure greed, pure appetite. In short, a monster. (The semi-redeemed Michael of *Godfather III* doesn't work for me.) But the Elizabeth that bids farewell to joy at the end of Kapur's movie is no monster but a martyr. She realizes that some of her people, forbidden to honor the mother of God, still need a holy virgin. She substitutes herself. It's not an act of ego but a patriotic transcendence of the ego that destroys her private life and stifles her sensuality.

It doesn't matter whether *Elizabeth* works as history or not. Even with my sketchy knowledge of the period, I noticed all sorts of temporal telescopings and some pretty hazy speculations (the death of Leicester's wife, for instance). This movie is first-rate only as sheer entertainment, less sweeping but also less stiff than *Kenilworth*, more feral and less politically complex than Robert Bolt's play, *Vivat, Vivat Regina!*, and—thank God!— less bombastic than Maxwell Anderson's *Elizabeth the Queen*. Shekhar Kapur uses screen images the way a poet-playwright uses verbal ones: each has its own momentary vigor but gains additional strength and meaning when reinforced later in the narrative by a similar yet contrasting image. Two examples:

The first powerful image in the film is that of Protestants going to the stake, their heads shaved, or sliced rather, for we are gruesomely shown that the razors cut through scalps as well as hair. The horror of these murders is chillingly conveyed. At the end of the film, therefore, when we see Elizabeth having her own strawberry blond hair hacked off so that she may don the garish red wig of the Virgin Queen, we realize that this transformation, though infinitely less horrible than that of the tortured Protestants, is also a martyrdom.

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When Princess Elizabeth, after living for years as a political prisoner in the shadow of the executioner's block, is called to step outside her quarters in order to receive a messenger, the entire screen is flooded by whiteness. Then, the image restored, we see the messenger kneeling before her. Again, the screen goes to white. The next thing we see and hear is the messenger telling Elizabeth that she is queen of England. These white-outs seem to promise the heroine that all the travails of her past are wiped out, that the future holds a new and happy life. But, of course, things don't work out that way. After the mature Elizabeth, embracing both her doom and her glory, has transformed herself into the Virgin Queen, the courtiers await her entrance. The screen nearly goes to white again as light pours through the doorway where the queen is entering. But, this time, the whiteness isn't total, for Elizabeth steps into it, and the courtiers, both thrilled and appalled, drop to their knees at the sight of her. The past hasn't been wiped out but the future has been arrogated, and the body of a spirited young woman has been usurped by an omnipotent crone.

Like Jean Simmons in *Young Bess* (1953) and Glenda Jackson in the first episode of the TV series "Elizabeth R," Cate Blanchett gets to play the queen in her pre-carapace, pre-icon days and, unlike them, she is at the exactly right moment in her life to do so. (Simmons was too callow; Jackson, wonderful in the later episodes, too mature.) Her voice is simply well-trained and bright rather than memorable, but her acting is supple, responsive, alive, and complex. She knows how to say much with a single gesture, as when she sighs with relief and straightens her back once the heavy royal ermine is lifted off her shoulders after the coronation. Crucially, Blanchett understands that the Elizabeth of this movie is a creature of potential, whose life force could have brought her a lifetime of joy but, under the circumstances, makes her a sleepless and conscientious tyrant.

The entire cast supports Blanchett admirably, especially Joseph Fiennes (Ralph's brother and with a voice better than Ralph's), every inch the Elizabethan buck as Dudley, and Richard Attenborough, who nicely captures the worried dignity of Lord Cecil. But the jewel of this cast is Geoffrey Rush as Walsingham. Coming after his poignant David Helfgott in *Shine* and an electrifying Javert in *Les Misérables*, this performance secures Rush's place in the pantheon of Great Actors Who Will Never Become Stars Because of Their Weird Looks. This Walsingham carries murderousness within himself as if it were a sacred mystery to be inflicted only on those who deserve the most choice and exquisite of tortures. Interrogating a priest suspended from a dungeon's ceiling, he sidles close to his victim as if he himself were a priest about to hear confession.

And, believe me, the Catholics in this movie deserve Walsingham at his worst. What a crew! The fanatic Queen Mary, mistaking her cancer for pregnancy; a Spanish ambassador-bishop, whose manners are as oily as his hair; a pope, portrayed by John Gielgud as an elderly serpent, dispatching an assassin directly from the Vatican; the assassin himself, a sturdy young priest dashing out the brains of boy spies against the rocks of Dover; the gloweringly obdurate Lord Norfolk, fantasizing the destruction of Elizabeth as he thrusts himself into the body of his equally sinister mistress.

So is this movie anti-Catholic? Yes, but only for the sake of melodrama, not doctrine. The forces of Catholicism and Protestantism are seen strictly as rival gangs, not agents of the divine. But Our Gang is always favored over the gangs from the other neighborhoods. And, since Anglicanism has been the state religion for over three hundred years, the Protestants are Our Gang for these British filmmakers. That's why Elizabeth gambols in sunlight, while Bloody Mary rots in the El Greco shadows of a crypt-like throne room, attended by Spanish dwarfs and skulking father confessors.

Elizabeth is history as mob warfare, and Cate Blanchett's Bess is the most beautiful and magnetic Lady Scarface you could ask for. □

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Now in English

Collected Fictions
Jorge Luis Borges
Translated by Andrew Hurley
Viking, $40, 565 pp.

Gene H. Bell-Villada

From the midsixties through the early eighties, Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges—the man and his thoughts both—seemed well-nigh ubiquitous. There were the appearances on TV, the standing-room-only lectures at college campuses, the bylines in the weeklies, even an interview in *Commonweal* (October 25, 1968). A shy, reclusive man, renowned for his complex, difficult art, Borges somehow burgeoned forth as everyone's favorite foreign author, the international man of letters for that era.

Following his death in Geneva in 1986, Borges's best works have settled into the rarefied ranks of the world's classics, while his most striking ideas have remained reliable currency, a part of our *fin-de-siècle* literary exchange. Fantastical realms invading ours; an effete French poet setting out to write *Don Quixote*; a cosmic library that houses every possible volume; a point in space containing all other points—these are some of the wilder notions that have made the term "Borgesian" almost as recognizable in its implications as are the familiar adjectives "Orwellian" or "Kafkaesque."

Ironically, by the time the elder Borges's face and voice had become ordinary fixtures within the broader cultural milieu, the artist's greatest work was well behind him. Those three-dozen short stories, penned between 1938 and the mid-fifties, started drawing admiration from overseas *literati* in the postwar years, and got a major boost in 1961 when Borges shared with Samuel Beckett the International Publishers' Prize. By then the sixtyish Argentinean was almost completely blind, and could write only *via* a hired amanuensis.

He also felt dried up as a fiction writer; the ideas just weren't coming like they used to. Enter his translator and secretary from 1967, Norman Thomas di Giovanni, who piqued Borges's muse and urged him to write stories once again. The results, alas, were disappointing. The pieces gathered in *Brodie's Report* (1970) and *The Book of Sand* (1975) were but a dim reflection of the grand, luminous visions that had shined forth in *Ficciones* (1944) and *El Aleph* (1949). The once-fresh intuitions had hardened into sententious tics, the cosmic insights narrowed into formulaic mannerisms. Intrinsically, Borges's later texts weren't all that bad; from a lesser writer, they'd be deemed worthy, "promising." But they are ever in the shadow of the playfully brooding, quietly dazzling, thoroughly inspired works of the genius at mid-century. They're like Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* or Faulkner's *The Town*; the Bard and the Mississippian, we know, did better than that.

Englishings of Borges are a history unto themselves. In 1962, two American volumes of his prose chanced to come out from avant-garde houses: the *Ficciones* (Grove, edited by Anthony Kerrigan) and an anthology, *Labyrinths* (New Directions, edited by James Irby and Donald Yates). The latter collection in particular achieved standard-item status, with sales somewhere in the six figures. Later, in the 1970s, di Giovanni did his own renderings of select works for E. P. Dutton, in which the Argentine's high style was "Americanized" somewhat, and both author and translator revised a bit here, deleted a tad there. Meanwhile, Anglophone readers have lacked a single, authoritative translation of all the stories, from apprenticeship to final statements.

Now comes the *Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley, a professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico. An expert hand, Hurley has previously rendered a half-dozen Hispanic authors, some of them forbiddingly colloquial in style and hence a challenge to the most seasoned translator. The Borges project, a labor of love, has been years in the making. The results are almost consistently first-rate, with supple rhythms that roll tripping-

"Mr. Gian-Carlo is waiting to be translated into English."

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ly on the tongue, and a liberal use of contractions, even in descriptive passages. Fashioning a uniformly smooth voice for all 110 pieces, Hurley distills them into a "universal" kind of English, largely unspecific to any time or place and thus not subject to fast fading. (Still, he isn't averse to translating the obscenity *pendejo*—in "Man on Pink Corner"—as "asshole," an improvement over di Giovanni's "kid.")

Some choices for titles exemplify his skill. For the early collection, *Historia universal de la infamia*, the concluding word is changed to "iniquity," which scans better, almost rhymes. The unforgettable classic story, "*Funes el memorioso*," often previously rendered as "Funes the Memorious," now achieves extra clarity as "Funes, His Memory." For "*La intrusa*," concerning a love-triangle, "The Interloper" seems more layered and evocative than di Giovanni's "The Intruder." Similarly, the succinctness of "The Wait" (for "*La espera*") has a visual impact, absent from "The Waiting" in *Labyrinths*.

At times Hurley's search for natural rhythms leads to a loss, at least for those of us who know earlier versions. Take the ending of "Emma Zunz," which Yates in *Labyrinths* renders thus: "True was Emma Zunz's tone, true was her shame, true her hate. True also was the outrage she had suffered. Only the circumstances were false...." Hurley, by contrast, remakes it, "Emma Zunz's tone was real, her shame was real, her hatred was real. The outrage that had been done to her was real. All that was false were the circumstances...." While Hurley's prose sounds more idiomatic, like everyday speech, Yates's, with its inversions that mirror the original yet also strike us with their strangeness, seems appropriate to the odd mental conceit being argued here.

Every reviewer has quibbles; I shall air mine. "Imbecilic" (page 505) sounds stilted; I would say "idiotic." In English we don't "consecrate" (page 381) but rather "dedicate" an essay to a topic. "Notorious" (page 143) is a false cognate for *notorio*, which actually signifies "well-known" or "obvious." One jarring adaptation is Hurley's use of "working class" (page 302), a sociopolitical construct about which Borges was simply clueless; "slum dwellers" better captures the spirit of the original. (On the other hand I liked Hurley's coining the term "trivia police," page 347.)

Such lapses are few; the *Collected Fictions* stands as a noble, indeed monumental endeavor. In addition, Hurley includes forty pages of detailed endnotes that elucidate obscure references, particularly those regarding matters South American. Still, I doubt that this volume will supplant earlier efforts, notably *Labyrinths*, which gathers both fiction and essays, is selective and manageable, and exists as a publishing event in its own right. But Hurley's Borges—like Robert Fitzgerald's Greeks, or those Penguin Russians many of us were nourished on—is here to stay. □

Gene H. Bell-Villada, *chair of Romance Languages at Williams College, recently published* The Pianist Who Liked Ayn Rand: A Novella & 13 Stories (*Amador*). *A second, updated edition of his* Borges and His Fiction *will appear next summer.*

FINAL TESTAMENT

An Introduction to the New Testament
Raymond E. Brown
Doubleday, $42.50, 878 pp.

Thomas H. Tobin

Introductions to the New Testament come in all sizes and shapes. The short ones tend to be user-friendly but don't tell you much. The long ones tell you a great deal but are often difficult to use. The late Raymond Brown's *An Introduction to the New Testament* is both a very long book and a very user-friendly book. No doubt this happy combination is the result not only of a long teaching career but also of serious reflection on how best to introduce these central Christian texts to readers for whom they are not only interesting culturally or historically but also religiously significant.

To do this Brown has made several quite explicit decisions about how to structure the book. First, he begins his treatment of each New Testament document with a minicommentary, whose purpose is to help the reader get into the text itself. Only then does he deal with the standard introductory questions such as author, date and place of composition, and sources. Second, at the end of his treatment of each document, he provides readers with a section on "Issues and Problems for Reflection," which deals with theological issues raised by the document. Third, he also provides useful bibliographies of books and articles in English so readers can easily explore issues on their own. Finally, Brown aims to be "centrist, not idiosyncratic." In an act of asceticism unusual among scholars (myself included), Brown carefully provides readers with what he regards as the majority opinion on an issue, even when he places himself in the minority. This doesn't mean he doesn't offer a wide range of opinions on important issues. He does. But he is always careful to locate where the majority of scholars stand.

The book itself is arranged in four major parts. In the first part Brown deals with a number of general issues important for understanding virtually any New Testament text. Here he explains the different methods of New Testament interpretation, including source, form, and redaction criticism, as well the political, social, and religious worlds of which the writers of the New Testament books were a part. In the second section, he deals with the four Gospels and texts related to the Gospels, such as the Acts of the Apostles which was written by the author of the Gospel of Luke, and

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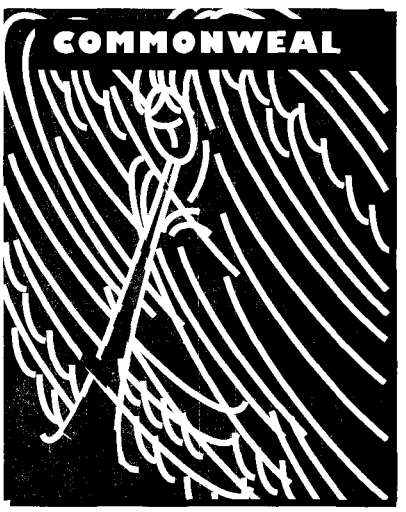

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the Letters of John which are part of the Johannine tradition. The third part is devoted to the Pauline Letters, first those universally admitted to have been written by Paul (1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans) and then those whose authorship is in dispute (2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy). In writing about the latter, Brown carefully gives the arguments for and against attributing one or another of them to Paul and the significance the decision makes for interpreting the particular letter. Finally, in the fourth part he analyzes all the other New Testament documents (the Letter to the Hebrews, the Letters of Peter, James, and Jude, and the Book of Revelation). In two appendices he also offers a short introduction to and evaluation of recent debates about the "historical Jesus" and valuable information about Jewish and other early Christian writings pertinent to the New Testament.

This book is consistently helpful, and for any introduction that is high praise. Brown has a remarkable capacity to make complex issues clear, which is different from making them simple. For example, he warns readers that the synoptic problem—the question of the literary relationship among the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke—generates complexity and that they may want to settle for reading his most general conclusions and skipping the rest. Yet his treatment of the problem is very clear, judicious, and within the range of any interested reader. The same is true for his treatment of the complex issues connected with the Gospel of John and the Johannine tradition. Although he claims to be writing for a general readership rather than for scholars, at least this scholar also learned a good deal from Brown's book. In whatever he wrote, Brown was consistently insightful.

As with any book, there are always some limitations. Over the years, Brown was consistently skeptical about isolating sources in New Testament documents, with the exception of the dependence of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke on the Gospel of Mark and a sayings source (the Q Document). This is especially so in the case of the Gospel of John and the Passion narrative in the Gospel of Mark. While there is ample room for skepticism, more attention to sources for our present New Testament documents would have offered readers a better sense of how early Christian thought developed. Brown was equally skeptical about influences on New Testament writers beyond the biblical tradition. While it is important to avoid "parallelomania," Brown underrated the influence of Hellenistic Judaism on, for example, the Prologue of John (John 1:1-18). The same is true of his views about the relationship of the Synoptic Gospels to Greco-Roman biographies. While he admitted that their first readers may have thought of them almost as lives of Christ, he was still unwilling to agree that their authors may have thought of them in the same way. These shortcomings, however, do virtually nothing to detract from what this book accomplishes.

Brown was a man of immense learning and great modesty, a rare enough combination. He was also a man of the church. As a priest and a member of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice, he spent most of his adult life introducing students for the ministry to the richness of the New Testament. The wealth of the Bible nourished his own convictions as a believing Christian, and he sought and succeeded in communicating that richness to several generations of students, most recently at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Brown obviously enjoyed the Bible and enjoyed communicating its riches to others. His *Introduction to the New Testament* is a marvelous example of both. I am reminded of the opening words of Simeon's canticle in the Gospel of Luke, "Now Lord, let your servant depart in peace, according to your word." □

Thomas H. Tobin, S.J., *is an associate professor of theology at Loyola University of Chicago. He writes frequently in the areas of New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism, and is completing a book on Paul's Letter to the Romans.*

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Clone
The Road to Dolly and the Path Ahead
by Gina Kolata
William Morrow, $23, 276 pp.

The Biotech Century
Harnessing the Gene and Remaking the World
by Jeremy Rifkin
Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, $24.95, 288 pp.

Human Cloning
Religious Responses
Ronald Cole-Turner, ed.
Westminster/John Knox, $15, 151 pp.

M. Therese Lysaught

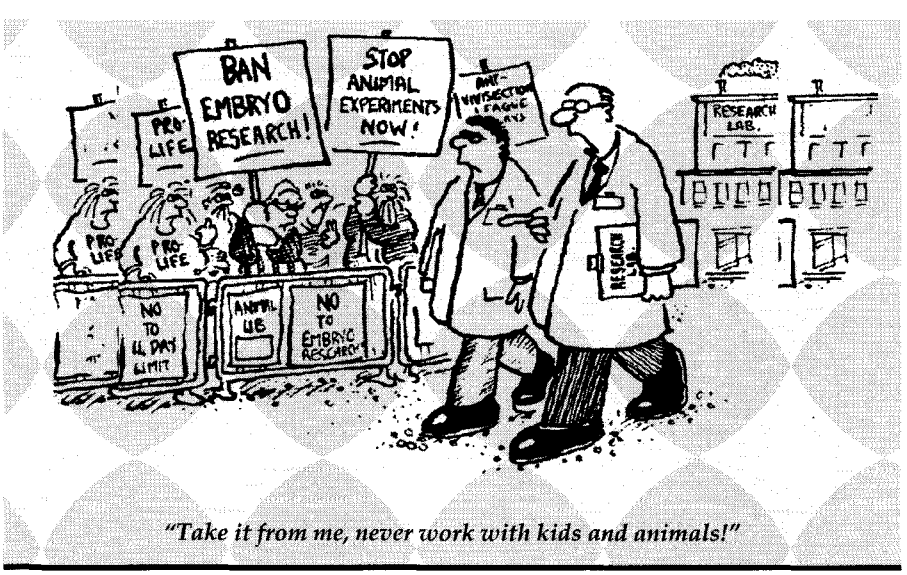
In February 1997, the word was out: the walls of the reproductive fortress had been breached—an adult sheep had been cloned. From TV news, newspapers, and magazine covers, Dolly's placid face stared blankly at us.

And many of us stared blankly back. Cloning? Although cloning-by-nuclear-transplantation was debated within the fledgling discipline of bioethics in the late 1960s, no one seemed prepared for it actually to happen. Most popular commentaries have provided detailed explanations of how the technique worked, hypothesized heart-rending and horrific scenarios of possible human applications, and identified ethical and theological questions. But little has been offered by way of substantial or compelling analysis. For readers interested in thinking more thoroughly about these issues, three books promise assistance; two deliver.

Gina Kolata, in *Clone: The Road to Dolly and the Path Ahead*, dispels the illusion that Dolly's birth came completely out of the blue. Kolata, a science writer for the *New York Times*, is credited as the "reporter who broke the story nationally." Here she tells the "story" in a broader sense, crafting a narrative account of science and culture in order to suggest that cloning "could not have happened at any time but now." Kolata begins in the late nineteenth century, tracing the development of the field of embryology, identifying key figures and their questions, briefly noting the context of postwar science in which the idea of human cloning was first broached, and weaving in a history of the development of bioethics in the 1960s. (She suggests that early bioethicists raised the issue of cloning in part as a marketing strategy to capture the public's attention and promote their nascent, struggling field.) The narrative continues with more in-depth accounts of recent cloning claims, set in the context of scientific and cultural developments in the 1970s (recombinant DNA, concerns about overpopulation, cloning in popular fiction, scandals, and fraud), culminating with Ian Wilmut's production of Dolly and the public response. In telling this story, Kolata also provides an enlightening window into the workings of science journalism as well as a particular take on the cultural dynamics of the scientific community.

Clone is a quick read and engaging. While it is certainly a must-read for anyone interested in the topic, even a casually informed reader will quickly discern problems in the presentation. First, and surprisingly, Kolata's narrative omits two rather important pieces of the story: the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century and the cloning controversy which occurred in 1993. In 1993, Robert J. Stillman and Jerry Hall at George Washington Medical Center announced to a stunned world that they had cloned seventeen human embryos. Although Stillman and Hall's work involved a different technique (the technologically mediated twinning or splitting of *in vitro* embryos) and did not involve the implantation of the embryos, it is a significant piece of the story insofar as it was clearly a human application, and it defined the terms of the public debate. The response to Dolly in 1997 was, for the most part, 1993 *redux*.

The page-turner flavor of *Clone* testifies to Kolata's experience as a journalist. At the same time, however, she is not burdened by the myth of journalistic objectivity. This brings us to the second problem. For as she tells the story of cloning, another narrative emerges—the narrative of the scientific "hero." Reading *Clone*, one gets the impression that those who labor in the scientific mainstream are a glitzy, cliquish, gossipy elite (all terms used by Kolata) easily misled by charismatic figures, prone to group



"Take it from me, never work with kids and animals!"

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thinking and extreme reactions, and fettered by scientific "dogma." They also have the embarrassing habit of being wrong. Kolata's "heroes," on the other hand, are "the animal scientists, the only ones *brave* enough to take up the cloning problems" [emphasis mine]. They are "intrepid," "soldiering on" in isolation from the mainstream, those with the "utter liberty" to attempt "the daring experiments that broke the laws of nature" [*sic*]. The individual who most fully embodies this persona is Danish scientist, Steen Willadsen. Clearly mesmerized by Willadsen, Kolata describes him—without obvious warrant—as "near-mythical," and as "one of the most unusual and brilliant scientists the twentieth century has seen." Willadsen is depicted as the consummate individualist and opportunist, brash, a "secret innovator," "visionary," and unconstrained by the system. Likewise Ian Wilmut, though sharing few of Willadsen's characteristics, emerges as a hero insofar as he is outside of the university-based scientific establishment.

Thus, at the end of *Clone* we have a particular kind of scientific hero, not an Einstein or even a Watson and Crick, who discovered fundamental scientific truths and changed the very nature of their disciplines. Nor do we have an Alexander Fleming or Jonas Salk, the discoverers respectively of penicillin and the polio vaccine, whose contributions brought healing and disease prevention on a global scale. Rather we end up with scientist-as-typical-American-hero, whose heroism is defined by his autonomy and penchant for bucking the "system": one who arrogantly and dismissively "takes a stand" against a cautious, societal-ethical wisdom, one who plows ahead without thinking about the consequences.

Kolata's handling of the "ethical" issues is equally suspect. Here her training as a journalist becomes a liability, for she is unable to provide an in-depth, balanced analysis of the arguments behind the positions she cites. In chapter 1, opinions of various ethicists and theologians are presented as having equal merit, embodying her belief that: "[I]f there is one lesson of cloning it is that there is no uniformly accepted way to think about the ethical questions that it elicits, and no agreement, even among the most thoughtful and well-informed commentators, about what is right and what is wrong."

Ironically, despite this lack of agreement, it is clear that for Kolata cloning is, in the end, unqualifiedly good. The final chapter is comprised almost exclusively of reasons for cloning. She makes emotional appeals for the range of human applications—pharmaceutical production, growing one's own organs for transplant (*in vitro*, of course), and helping couples who are "infertile and desperate to have a baby of their own." She quickly discounts as straw objections the potential for inflicting unknown genetic harm on cloned persons and the possibility that cloning might result in accelerated aging or cancer. She seems convinced by biologist Lee Silver's argument that "cloning is actually genetically safer than normal sexual reproduction," and cites him often. Neither Silver nor Kolata seem to recognize how Huxleyian their rhetoric has become. She baits those with reservations about cloning by closing her book with a provocative claim from Willadsen—that human cloning has likely already "accidentally" taken place in the context of *in vitro* fertilization.

Kolata's analysis is shaped by a minimalist ethical framework—the increasingly commonplace meld of utilitarian libertarianism (autonomy with a splash of beneficence as long as no one is harmed). From within this framework, it is impossible to formulate any serious objections to something like cloning. To do so requires a more nuanced cultural and conceptual perspective.

Where Kolata fails, Jeremy Rifkin surprisingly delivers. In his book *The Biotech Century: Harnessing the Gene and Remaking the World*, Rifkin offers a more complex account of the cultural narrative that has brought us to this point. Rifkin, president of the enigmatic Foundation on Economic Trends, is best known alternately as either a troublemaking Luddite, prone to emotional sloganeering and to filing lawsuits, or as the Ralph Nader of biotechnology, championing the interests of the voiceless environment and citizen. Thus, many readers might dismiss this book simply because Rifkin wrote it. That would be a mistake. I approached it—my first exposure to his work—intrigued but skeptical. What I found was a cogent and compelling account not of cloning *per se* (which receives only passing treatment) but of the network of cultural and conceptual constructs both driving and issuing from biotechnology.

Rifkin argues that "we are in the throes of one of the great transformations in world history," a fundamental economic and social reorganization from a primarily industrial socio-economic order to one mediated by biotechnology. This sort of transformation, he suggests, requires a convergence of changes in specific technological and social forces, seven of which he discusses at length. Greatly abbreviated, they are: (1) seeing the gene pool as the primary raw material for economic activity; (2) the patenting of genes and living organisms; (3) the globalization of commerce and trade; (4) an emergent commercially driven eugenics culture; (5) an ideology of sociobiology (nature over nurture) that facilitates cultural acceptance of the new biotechnologies; (6) the merging of information technologies and genetics; and (7) a new understanding of nature undergirding a new cosmological narrative.

Rifkin devotes one chapter to each of these seven "strands," linking each to a counterpart in the industrial era. For example, he begins the chapter on information technologies with a discussion of the cultural impact of printing in the fifteenth century. Although he at times paints in broad strokes, the comparisons are suggestive. His chapters on patenting life and the environmental impact of transgenics (genetic engineering involving different species) are a bit tedious and perhaps given to overstatement, but he marshals an impressive amount of information. Moreover, on the topics with which I am most familiar—eugenics and sociobiology—his analysis of the contemporary issues is on target. His final chapters, on the confluence of comput-

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ers and genetics and on the emergent cosmology, are original and compelling.

In the end, although his biases are clear and he is far more critical than approving, he does not advocate for or against any particular technological development. There is no frantic condemnation of science and genetic technologies or a Luddite call to return to an idyllic past. Rather, he challenges the reader to accept a crucial and cogent proposition: that "technological innovations [are] socially constructed projections of [a particular] world view, nurtured by market forces and made current by the prevailing social milieu." He demonstrates that complex interrelationships exist between particular practices or technological developments, philosophical concepts, and economic and social structures. One example discussed at length is how Darwin's theory of nature (evolution), British industrial capitalism, and the practices of Social Darwinism obviously complemented one another. Similarly, a convincing analysis of the confluence of information technologies, genetic engineering, and postmodern philosophy leads Rifkin to the conclusion that: "Life, long thought of as God's handiwork, more recently viewed as a random process guided by the 'invisible hand' of natural selection, is now being reimagined as an artistic medium with untold possibilities."

Rifkin is not fatalistic. Rather, he notes "the question is what kind of biotechnologies will we choose in the coming Biotech Century?" He seems to believe that, even in the face of this overwhelming sociotechnological shift, individual decisions can make a difference. He calls upon readers to understand the dynamic social and cultural matrix underlying what appear to be "individual" decisions or "isolated" technological developments and to choose practices that will foster a world they will want to live in.

While I am not as optimistic as Rifkin about the power of individual or even communal decisions to counter effectively the momentum of the changes he has described, he understands the crux of the ethical question. For it is not simply a question of whether cloning is "right" or "wrong." It is a matter of understanding how certain philosophical and political convictions produce certain technological practices and how, in turn, participation in particular practices commits us to certain beliefs. How does one live, for example, if one believes that life is an infinitely manipulatable "artistic medium with untold possibilities"? In short, it is a matter of who we understand ourselves to be, who we hope to become, and what sort of world we seek to live in. It is only after answering these questions that one will be able to articulate a cogent critique of cloning.

Here, ethics elides into theology. Without naming them as such, Rifkin identifies what are ultimately important theological questions. The task of discussing them falls explicitly to *Human Cloning: Religious Responses*, a collection of twelve essays by Christian ethicists and members of denominational bodies.

If one is looking for a compelling theological analysis of cloning, one will find little help here. Overall, this book is quite disappointing. Not only will it not assist those who are serious in their faith in interpreting cloning; it will likely bolster the opinion among scientists and secular ethicists that Christians (or religious perspectives) really have nothing to add. Each essay is short, averaging ten pages (including footnotes and bibliography), which does not provide much space for in-depth analysis. As the authors are covering the same ground, the essays are repetitive, and many simply rehash with little depth what have now become commonplaces: dominion versus stewardship; the *imago dei*; human uniqueness and dignity; God's sovereignty; etc. Except for one essay, readers will find little if anything new.

While a number of methodological correctives could be suggested, I will mention only three. First, religious traditions ought to be situated as just that—traditions, traditions of wisdom, reflection, practice, and argument that have evolved over millennia. For too many of the essays, "religious" concepts appear to be generic, unanchored to any tradition which might offer them substance.

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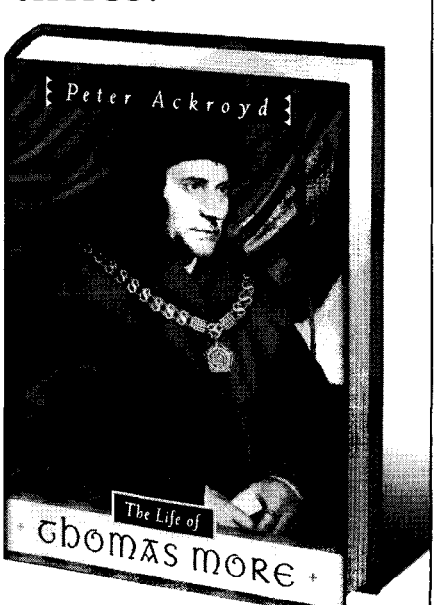

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Second, even those who cite biblical warrants detach these concepts from Scripture. For example, many of the authors cite the notion of *imago dei*, immediately drawing the conclusion from one line in Genesis that either humans are thus created by God as unique and individual or that, because God is creative, it is human nature to likewise be creative. But it is methodologically deficient to draw conclusions from a single scriptural verse. If biblical warrants are going to be invoked, they must be fleshed out. Third, one cannot draw adequate theological conclusions from one or two biblical concepts. As in science, to practice the discipline well, one must deal with all the data; one cannot simply select the data that best support one's conclusions and ignore the rest. Thus, the notion of the *imago dei* must be related to, and interpreted in light of, other central theological concepts and communal practices—for example, sin, discipleship, prophetic justice, forgiveness, the people of Israel, and the Christian *ecclesia*.

The only essay that embodies this sort of methodological rigor, and the only one that offers anything new and insightful, is "Cloning the Human Body" by Stanley Hauerwas and Joel Shuman. In characteristic form, Hauerwas and Shuman change the question, claiming "the question for us is not whether cloning is a good or a bad thing....'Cloning' is not a new thing for Christians....but whose body, exactly, should we be nonsexually reproducing? For Christians have for nearly two thousand years been about the business of nonsexually reproducing the one body that matters most, and indeed the only one that must be reproduced in pursuit of the human good, and that is Christ's body." Hauerwas and Shuman's argument unfolds scripturally (working primarily from the New Testament rather than Genesis, as would befit a Christian analysis), unpacking the concept of the human body through a Pauline interpretation of baptism. The authors resist the modern tendency to make Pauline language "'mere' metaphor" and hold that baptism changes one's embodiment such that, for Christians, one's primary identity no longer resides in one's genes and genes no longer determine one's destiny. In a move that would resonate with Rifkin, the authors suggest that practices like baptism commit Christians to certain realities, in this case regarding the body, which in turn affect how we live out our relationship with others, with nature, and with God.

The books by Kolata and Rifkin are informative, accessible, thought-provoking, and enjoyable to read. Those interested in theological analysis must, unfortunately, await future publications. □

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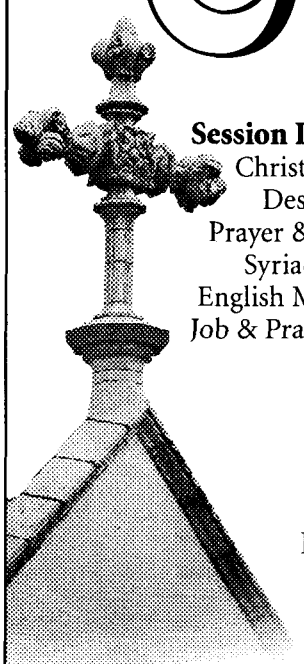

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CORRESPONDENCE

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erced" the money-changers out of the Temple, for it will be dealing with those who seek to turn the world he died to save into a den of thieves, or worse.

I am indeed aware that the Brits have profited too long from skillful P.R., but nothing they did in India, Ireland, or elsewhere—and nothing that we have done, no matter how shameful, in Latin America or Vietnam—touches the evil of Auschwitz or approaches the bestiality the Serbs unleashed in Bosnia. Are we go go on contemplating, or ignoring, such horrors until we finally get that police force in place?

My letter ought to have made quite clear that I am criticizing our conduct of foreign affairs because the wars we have engaged in for a generation or two have not been just, though I would suggest that the injustice of one of them, the Gulf War, lay as much in stopping too soon as in starting it in the first place.

Nor does acceptance of the concept of a just war mean I'm plumping for another war to end all wars. If we could bring ourselves to try a foreign policy based on a just-war theory, carefully articulated and rigorously applied, we might learn to use power rationally, to avoid the farce of invading Grenada, the cruelty of blockading Cuba, the blatant illegality of mining Nicaragua's harbors, as well as the wishy-washiness of our conduct in Bosnia. We might even be led to pay what we owe the United Nations, thereby bringing that police force—to speak in Aristotelian terms—from potency to act. For just wars can achieve something. Even if we list in meticulous details all the ways in which we failed in our conduct of World War II to live up to our principles, it is very hard to see how any of us would have been better off had we allowed Hitler, like Hussein, to go on strutting.

As for Christ's request that we forgive our enemies, I pray almost daily that God forgive me my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me. Knowing how hard it is to keep my part of that bargain, I know as well what chutzpah I would be guilty of, how many other people's other cheeks I would be seeking to turn, were I to pretend that I had the right to forgive those who have trespassed not against me but against others in ways unspeakably worse than anything I have ever had to bear. Mladic is not mine to forgive.

There is need aplenty for forgiveness in Bosnia. I think it would be easier for all those who have suffered there—Muslim, Croat, or Serb—to extend it to one another did they not have also to forgive us for denying them the help their dire distress and our power meant we were obliged to give.

MARIAN BURKHART
New York, N.Y.

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ROOM AT THE INN?

Robert Joe Stout

On their way to the campground southeast of San Jose, California, twenty-four-year-old Kathy Macdougall and her twenty-eight-year-old boyfriend spotted an abandoned house, half-hidden by a clump of hackberry trees. "Turn around!" Macdougall said impulsively. "Let's go back and look at it." Thistles and runaway weigela clogged the yard; a step was missing from the porch. The structure hadn't been inhabited for months, but the foundation was solid and the roof seemed to be in good shape.

"Maybe we could make a deal to fix it up and live in it?" Macdougall suggested. The couple cleaned the floors and walls, repaired the windows, fogged the roaches and fleas, and pruned trees. When the owner appeared, they arranged to live in the house and bring it up to code at their own expense instead of paying rent.

Squatters fill abandoned or condemned apartment buildings, warehouses, tool sheds, school buses, boiler rooms, rooftops, fishing boats, hotel rooms, garages, and barns throughout the nation. The vast majority are employed, young, out-of-the-mainstream immigrants, students, divorced single parents, welfare mothers, and seasonal workers.

In California, four out of five persons between the ages of 18 and 25 entering the work force do not earn enough to rent an individual house or an apartment, lobbyists for a low-income housing coalition told the California legislature. In most areas where work is available, the supply of affordable housing is tight. Millions of small, single-family residences have disappeared, victims of urban renewal, overly restrictive zoning regulations, and inflation.

Most members of this "shelter-poor" generation regard their housing dilemmas as temporary. They draw sharp distinctions between themselves and the hard-core homeless, who have no resources and no way to pull themselves out of their desperate situations.

A large number of these "homesteaders" both hold down jobs and go to college. Their fluid lifestyle forces them periodically to move into and out of their parents' homes. Twenty-four-year-old Bob Trojahn of Los Angeles moved back with his mother after he got out of the Air Force. "She treats me like a twelve-year-old," he told me. Accustomed to the freedom of doing as he pleased, Trojahn says he accepts this "reversion to dependency" as a temporary lifestyle change.

When a better deal than a $155-a-month basement room popped up, a Fresno State University student grabbed it. The better deal was a Volkswagen van that an acquaintance couldn't afford to get fixed. An extension cord to the van provided electricity; the student paid a friend $10 a month for shower privileges. When he wanted to study, he rolled up his bed and reinstalled the van's seats and fold-down table, but admits that he did most of his homework in university-area coffee houses.

Former university student Carol Mullins lived in her car for an entire semester. She scheduled morning gym classes so that she could use the showers, studied in the library, and ate at school cafeterias and neighborhood carry-out restaurants. "I could have been worse off," she sighs. "I've got more than a few girlfriends who've manipulated themselves into relationships, just to have a place to live."

The "first, last, and security deposit" requirement imposed by many landlords and management companies proves to be a stumbling block for many young workers and students, particularly those with poor or nonexistent credit histories. "I can come up with the $550 a month," another university student said, "but where am I going to get $1,400 to move into an apartment?"

California housing advocates won a suit some years back forbidding management companies from applying a "3x1" formula requiring prospective tenants to have monthly incomes equal to three times the unit's rent. But in 1991 the California Supreme Court reversed a lower court's ruling. Legal Services attorneys point out that the "3x1" formula discriminates against working welfare mothers who don't receive enough income to qualify for even the least expensive apartments.

Many management companies subscribe to services that provide them with the names of individuals who have been evicted or who have been involved in lawsuits with their landlords. They can refuse to rent to individuals whose names appear on the lists, even if the claims against those persons were dismissed.

A young Santa Cruz woman who was blackballed after her boyfriend "bailed out owing three months' rent" complains, "I can't make enough money to rent a place of my own, much less buy a place like my parents had. When I was growing up, I thought our house was a dump. It was one of those old fakey ranch-style places, with three little bedrooms and a lawn that always needed mowing. I used to have to fight with my sister for bathroom space. I know now it was the best place to live I'll ever have." □

Robert Joe Stout, *a former newspaper and magazine reporter and editor, has published two novels and a book of poems,* They Still Play Baseball the Old Way.

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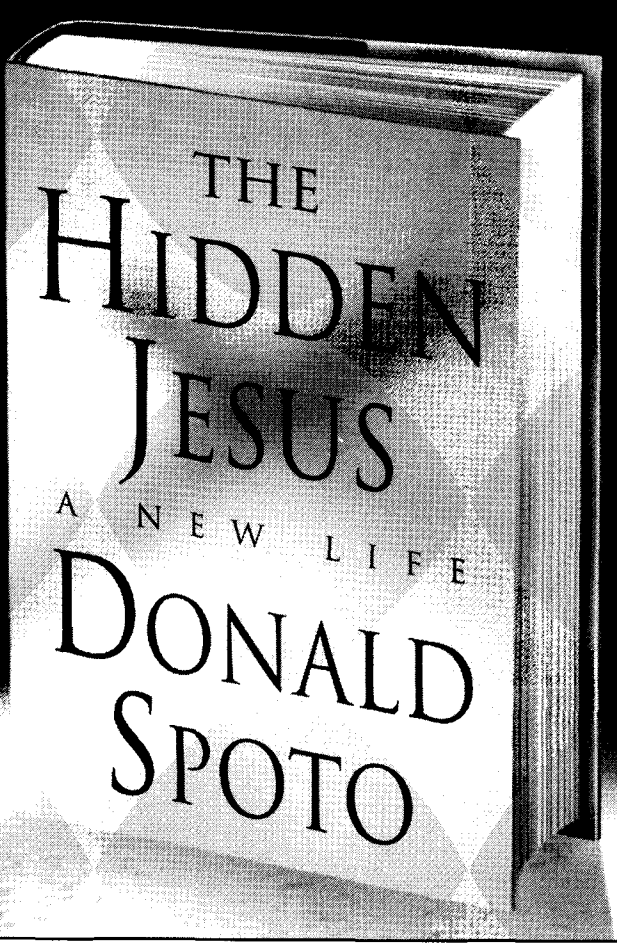

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